

# Who Needs to Be in the House of God?

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[ 0 : 00 ] We receive God's word trusting that it is inspired by him. It's breathed out by the Holy Spirit. And it is the sword of the Spirit in his hand, so to speak.

It's sharper than any two-edged sword, and it pierces through to man's heart. We ask that he will do that today. A Psalm of David. The Lord is my light and my salvation.

Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked came against me to eat up my flesh, my enemies and foes, they stumbled and fell.

Though an army may encamp against me, my heart shall not fear. Though war may rise against me, in this I will be confident. One thing I have desired of the Lord, that I will seek.

That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. To behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple.

[ 1 : 05 ] For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion. In the secret place of his tabernacle he shall hide me. He shall set me high upon a rock.

And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies. All around me. Therefore, I will offer sacrifices of joy in his tabernacle.

I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord. Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice. Have mercy also upon me and answer me. When you said, seek my face, my heart said to you, your face, Lord, I will seek.

Do not hide your face from me. Do not turn your servant away in anger. You have been my help. Do not leave me nor forsake me. O God of my salvation.

When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take care of me. Teach me your way, O Lord, and lead me in a smooth path because of my enemies.

[ 2 : 13 ] Do not deliver me to the will of my adversaries. For false witnesses have risen against me and such as breathe out violence. I would have lost heart unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

Wait on the Lord. Be of good courage and he shall strengthen your heart. Wait, I say, on the Lord. The word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God. Please be seated. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of the Lord stands forever. Please pray with me.

Amen. Oh, Lord, we pray that you will please give us a glimpse of your majesty, your glory, your goodness.

Lord, by the ministry and the intercession of Jesus Christ, whose body was torn like the veil. Please give us access into the secret place of your tabernacle, into the holy of holies, where your glory dwells.

[ 3 : 30 ] Lord, teach us to receive you by faith today. We ask this, Lord, for Christ's sake alone.

Amen. Amen. Amen. A father's house is where he rests, where he retreats with his family, where he protects and teaches his children, and where he welcomes, serves, and feasts with his close friends.

The house is a special place. When you get invited over to someone else's house, it's a sign of love, trust, and honor to be invited as a guest.

To be in the place where your close friend dwells. We read in Psalm 27, another Psalm of David. We don't have any other firm indications of the exact occasion.

But we do know from our study of 1 Samuel that David was often homeless. And we could imagine when he was in the cave and hiding in darkness outside of the kingdom on earth.

He was very homesick. And his heart was not there, not in the land of the Philistines. His heart was in the land that God had promised to be in the presence where God promised to rule over and be

with his people.

[ 4 : 58 ] Psalm 27, David confesses that homesickness in his heart. Would you look at verse 4? He's homesick for one thing above all others.

He says in verse 4, One thing I have desire of the Lord, that I will seek, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord.

We'd never dream of asking for that if it weren't for the Spirit breathing those words out. But this is so fitting, this revelation of who God is according to all of his word.

You and I, like David, we are weak, aren't we? We're broken. And Jesus said, I came exactly for you, for you who are sick and weak.

He came for those who are fatherless and hopeless. We who are most needy in that moment of our greatest need. We best reflect the mercy, the grace, and the power of God who came to seek and save us, who were lost and hopeless without him.

[ 6 : 19 ] So my prayer today is that the Spirit will help us as we walk through verse by verse Psalm 27 with four encouragements for people like you and me.

Answering this question, the title of our sermon. Who needs to be in the house of God? Who needs to be in the house of God?

Number one, we whose hearts tend to fear. We need to be in the house of God. We whose hearts tend to fear need to be in the house of God.

Look at verse one. The Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life.

Of whom shall I be afraid? I loved how Jeremiah pointed out in our Bible study this morning. The Lord is my light and he exposes all that we are.

[ 7 : 23 ] And we should be afraid. But we know also in that the same holy God whose light is so bright, exposing everything in us. He is also our salvation. And that great fear of God and reverence and trust in him as our Savior leaves no room in our hearts to fear man.

Of whom shall we be afraid compared to God? Confesses our weakness. God himself is the strength of my life. I have no strength on my own.

God is all my strength. Who shall I be afraid of? He says next, when the wicked came against me. He's referring to this in the past tense.

Looking back, the wicked came against me. And he says something very surprising in Hebrew poetry. They came to eat my flesh. We don't know historically of cannibals in this land, but that's how it felt.

They're coming like like ravenous wolves or beasts and jackals that are going to try to devour and eat up his flesh. That's what the enemies were like. It's a terrifying thought.

[ 8 : 31 ] My enemies, my foes looking back against God's power. They stumbled and fell. Saul was one of those enemies and he couldn't lead a campaign against David without stumbling all over themselves and looking foolish.

And ultimately, that's how the kingdom of Saul is described. A fallen kingdom echoing the fallen state of mankind under the first king, Adam, pointing to our need for a much greater king who will not fall.

And that's our Lord Jesus Christ. Verse three, he says, though an army may encamp against me. Now he's looking forward.

It's a hypothetical threat in the future. This is a terrifying thing for someone who's going to be receiving the responsibility of protecting as king over a people. And to encamp against a nation is to besiege them.

It's like a cold war. We're going to bring our troops all the way around the walls of their city. We're not going to let anything come in or anything come out until they starve. They're under siege. And he says, if that were to happen, my heart shall not fear.

[ 9 : 46 ] But what if it gets out of that cold war? He says, though war may arise against me. And so now they're no longer just waiting and watching us starve and get weak. Now they're attacking us.

It's war that's broken out against God's people. David says in this, I will be confident the same truth about God. God remains the same. He is still my light.

He is still my salvation. My heart shall not fear even then because the Lord is the strength of my life. David's describing the fear of his heart in a very real way.

He sensed this fear welling up. The wicked are coming after him. And he can even fear things that haven't even happened yet in the future. But what truth did the Lord minister to David in the midst of those fears?

He said, David, I've been strong for you in the past. I've protected you. I've caused your enemies' plans to falter before. And I will do this again.

[10:54] And then what did the Lord lead David to respond with? He said, David, when your fears are welling up, and you're wanting to look out there at the world, at man, remember who I am.

Look at me instead. And the response from David then of this truth of who God is, he says in verse 3, my heart shall not fear.

To me, it reads like he's saying, I do fear now, but the Lord is leading me to trust him and who he is that my heart, at least eventually, shall not fear.

I will trust in the Lord's victory, and I will find comfort in the presence of God. I will be reminded over and over of who God is and what he has done, his wondrous works.

And the Lord will work into me a confidence in him that pushes out my natural fear of man. Where is it that David would get these reminders of who God is and the great works of God?

[12:03] The language in this whole psalm is, it's like a man in exile, pushed out, but he's, at least in his mind and his soul and his heart, he's remembering the worship in the house of God.

That's the theme of the psalm. He's approaching the Lord as if, as if it were through the old covenant ceremonial laws. Richard Sibbes, one of the Puritans, made this comment.

For the Jews, there was one national congregation and only one place, only one tabernacle, only one holy of holies where you could have communion with God.

But now, through Jesus Christ, God has, has made Jesus himself, the holy of holies, the place where God meets with sinners and calls us righteous and clean and pardoned and safe in Christ. And Jesus said, where you gather in my name, in me, there the Lord dwells with you. God has erected tabernacles all over the world, particular churches.

[13:09] Richard Sibbes went on to say, the tabernacle or house of God now are the visible churches. These same places are where the means of salvation are ministered over and over again.

This is where God's people in the new covenant receive Christ through his word. It's where we hear reminders of the wondrous works of God. We hear reminders of who God is and what he promises to us as people.

It's where the church gathers and we picture the gospel through baptism and we celebrate the gospel visible at the Lord's Supper when we gather in his name. Every true local church is now a house of God where God dwells with his people and where he meets us.

So like David, we whose hearts also tend to fear in this world, we love to be in the house of God. We love to be reminded together of who God is, what he has done and what he promises.

Number two, who needs to be in the house of God? Not only we who tend to fear, but also we who experience times of trouble, we need to be in the house of God.

[14:32] We who experience times of trouble need to be in the house of God. In verse four, David goes on to say, one thing I have desired of the Lord that I will seek, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.

Why, David? Why do you want to be there? To behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple. Verse five, for in the time of trouble, he shall hide me in the pavilion, in his secret place of his tabernacle.

There he shall hide me. He shall set me as up high upon a rock. This is describing a man who's been hunted in the wilderness, away from home.

He has no place where he can go that he knows he will be safe. But yet he's trusting that if God had nowhere else to tuck David away and hide him from his enemies, the Lord would put him in the Holy of Holies.

That place where a sinner like David has no right to be. The Lord would do that to keep his servants safe. And think of this wonderful foreshadowing.

[15:49] David is reflecting upon the pavilion of the Lord, the tabernacle that is lifted up according to the regulations God gave through Moses a Mount Sinai to all the people of Israel for them to follow.

This is how you will worship the Lord. And this is how you will approach the Holy God. And we're told that Moses was given these instructions, every detail about the tabernacle, following the pattern of heaven.

It's the pattern of God's plan to redeem his people from all time. The tabernacle was a shadow, the book of Hebrews tells us, of the future work of Jesus Christ.

It's a pattern of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ. The book of Revelation said Jesus was slain as that Lamb before the foundations of the world.

This is what the tabernacle was ministering by faith to men like David and Moses and all those who would worship the one true God under the old covenant ceremonial law.

[16:53] And in David's times of trouble, that's where he wants to be. He wants to be in the tabernacle of the Lord. He says there in verse 5, He shall set me up, up high upon a rock.

That will be my fortress, that spiritual meeting place where the Lord himself and his presence will be my shield. Verse 6, He says, Now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me.

He feels hunted down now. He feels like he has to be like, you know, like a beast of the field that goes into hiding and finds a hole in the ground to not get devoured. But there, the Lord will lift him up head above all of his other enemies that want to kill him.

And his response, it comes next in verse 6, I will offer sacrifices of joy in his tabernacle. I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord.

Verse 7, Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice, have mercy also upon me and answer me. All of this, David is crying out to the Lord, at least spiritually.

[18:11] He's with the Lord as if it were in the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle. But it's in the midst of times of trouble. Times of trouble are moments when we feel so overwhelmed that we start to misinterpret current frustrations as if they are going to be permanent threats on us.

We've been through that, many of you, maybe even this week. I feel like I cannot go on one more day with this level of intensity, this much trouble and frustration. And in my mind, I can start to think there's no light at the end of this tunnel.

There's no end to it. We can see this sometimes more easily in others. If you work with children, you'll notice a child that's, they're just stuck in that mode of despair.

Fight, flight, or freeze. And they just can't get out of it. Nothing seems to be able to pull them to a place of safety. Maybe you know a person and just seems stuck in that for a while like a doom loop where they just, you know, one answer is going to be met by another.

refutation and there's no hope, there's no good answer that I can give this brother or this sister.

They're stuck. Those are times of trouble that we understand as well.

[19:31] Verse 6 implies that David's head was drooping down. And in this trouble, when he's low, what did the Lord minister to David? He says in verse 5, the Lord shall hide me in his pavilion.

Come to my house, David. Come within my walls. Come be in the secret place of my tabernacle. It will be your rock, your fortress. In the Holy of Holies, a place of intimate proximity, communion with the Lord.

Not only will David be kept safe there, what's more, we're told in verse 4, while you're safe with me in my presence, David, you will behold my beauty there.

There, David says, I will behold the beauty or the delightfulness of God. this commentary was helpful to me. The beauty of the Lord to be seen in his house in this life, in the tabernacle, in the old covenant, in the church today.

[20:42] It is not the beauty of the essence of God as if we could see God who is spirit with our own physical eyes. No man can see God and live, Exodus 33 tells us.

And it's before this essential glory of God that the angels have to cover their faces with their wings as Isaiah 6 describes.

So what is the beauty of the Lord? The beauty of the Lord is a revelation of who he is and what he has done through his word. It's the truth of God as our redeemer.

This is ministered to us through the word, through the sacraments, baptism in the Lord's Supper within his church, within the house of God today. There with the eyes of faith by the ministry of the Spirit, he enlightens to us his goodness, his justice, his love, and his mercy in Jesus Christ.

This is the beauty of God that he ministers to us by faith. And when God brings David there for safety and to behold his beauty, how does God lead David to respond?

[ 21 : 56 ] In verse 4, we read that the Lord replaced David's fears with this great overriding desire. That one thing above all others that I desire, that I will seek, it's to dwell here in the house of the Lord.

The Lord led David to inquire in his temple, to be around God, to hear more of God, like wave after wave from the ocean, like all of the sand of the shore, the beauty of God. It's immeasurable. We'll never get to the bottom of it. I want inquire of the Lord. I want more and more of him in his house. In verse 6, the Lord led David therefore to respond with sacrifices of joy in God's tabernacle.

He says, I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord. The Lord leads his people like David to cry out, desiring this from God and praying that God will hear us in return.

Verse 7, Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice, have mercy upon me, answer me. It's a communion with God that's reciprocal. The Lord reveals who he is to us.

[ 23 : 08 ] We respond with joy. He says, Hear me, Lord, when I cry to mercy and let me know that you have heard my prayer. In times of trouble, in Jesus Christ, according to Hebrews 10, we need to remember that through the ministry of our Lord Jesus, we too approach with boldness our holy God in the holy of holies by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he has consecrated for us through the veil that is his flesh and we have him, Jesus Christ, as our high priest over the house of God.

And so, through Christ, we draw near with a true heart and full assurance of faith. In Jesus Christ, brothers and sisters, we find the mercy of God.

In Jesus Christ, we behold the beauty of our creator. Our Lord Jesus heals his people from our fear and he stirs in us a response of joy.

So we who know times of trouble, we love to be in the house of God in the midst of those troubles. There's nowhere else we want to be.

This is the one place we desire because here, God's people celebrate Christ's sacrifice for us with joy. When we gather in his name as a church, we shout and we sing like we do nowhere else.

[ 24 : 35 ] and we remember our Lord in praises and songs that magnify who he is to us.

In our trouble, we need to be in the house of the Lord. Who else needs to be in the house of the Lord? Number three, we who know what it is to feel abandoned, we need to be in the house of the Lord.

We who know what it is to feel abandoned or rejected. We need to be in the house of the Lord. In verse eight, David says, When you said, seek my face, my heart said to you, your face, Lord, I will seek.

Do not hide your face from me. Do not turn your servant away in anger, for you have been my help. Do not leave me nor forsake me, O God of my salvation. Verse 10, he describes what it would be like if God were to forsake him.

We know that David had a father, Jesse, who seems to have feared the Lord, so David was not a literal orphan, but David knew rejection. And many of us know rejection and abandonment.

[ 25 : 51 ] Even some of the physiological symptoms of trauma or rejection that a person has suffered in childhood still affect us as adults. the pain of rejection lingers.

David compares the rejection that he had experienced to the most powerful imagery available, to being an orphan child. And he cries out in verse 9, Do not turn your servant away, Lord, in anger. Do not leave me nor forsake me. He had seen Saul rise up against God and Saul rejected God as the king over the people and the Lord rejected Saul as king.

David says, Lord, please don't do that. Don't reject or forsake me. He said, when my father and mother forsake me, I know that even then, Lord, that's not who you are.

You will still take care of me. The Lord ministers to David in that time of abandonment and feeling rejected. In verse 8, God says, seek my face.

[ 27 : 01 ] It's like God says to David and to you and me, dear child, like we would to one of our own children that we love, look me in the eyes. Turn your face to me.

Seek my face. I remember as part of training to become a foster parent, you learn about the powerful connection between a child and their parent or an adoptive parent.

And the child that's been abandoned or neglected has serious trauma that they've experienced even on their whole nervous system. But when a parent holds that child, no matter the age of the child and lets them have face-to-face communication and connection with the parent, the Lord

somehow ministers a healing there through eye contact, facial expression, warm words, warm tone. The parent contributes to the healing of a profoundly traumatized person. The face of the adoptive parent, it helps to regulate the nervous system of that orphaned child. face-to-face connection reassures that person they are safe, they are loved, they are cared for. You see, the kindness of God in calling David, calling you and me, seek my face, commune with me. [ 28 : 35 ] And how does David respond? See, God initiates it, seek my face, David, and then David responds by saying, Lord, your face I will seek.

I love Thomas Goodwin's comment here. God speaking, telling us to seek God, to pray to God, is such as his speech first was.

Think of the very first words God ever said when he made the world. He said, let there be light and there was light. So here, God says, let there be prayer and there is prayer. prayer. That is, he pours upon a person, a spirit of grace and supplication, a praying spirit. He heats up and enlarges our affections with a longing to be alone with God, to pour out the soul to God. And God does this in his children that he's adopted until you and I commune with him in prayer. His encouragement is when the Lord is doing that to you, through whatever means it takes, causing you to seek the face of your creator.

[ 29 : 48 ] Observe such times and do it. Don't neglect it. Strike while the iron is hot. This is a special opportunity.

God has called you to seek his face. It's God's fatherly love and care that lead David to desire and to ask for more of this communion with God.

In verse 9, he asks, do not hide your face from me. The Lord has taught David that he is trustworthy. The Lord has taught David that he will not abandon him.

Instead, the Lord does for David what he does for you and me. As a loving father, he causes us to commune with God, to walk with God. And the response in verse 11 is David says, teach me your way, O Lord.

Show me how to walk with you and lead me in a smooth path even in the midst of all my trouble and my enemies. So when you and I also feel abandoned, rejected, or forsaken, Jesus Christ draws near to us.

[ 30 : 57 ] Remember his words in John 14, 18 that we read a moment ago. Jesus said, I will not leave you as orphans. I will give you my Holy Spirit. He will keep you near me, near my father, until that day when I come back for you again.

Our Lord calls us his children. He reminds us that we belong in his family. He is near. We are safely held by him, our loving father.

And he leads us on. Our Lord teaches us his way. And he does this through his church, through the house of God. First Timothy 3, 15, the house of God is the church of the living God.

It's the pillar and ground of the truth. We who know what it is to feel abandoned, we love to be in the house of God for this reason too.

It's here in the house of God where his people seek his face. It's here where the Lord stirs up our hearts to pray, to hear from him, and to commune with him as his children.

[ 32 : 08 ] Well, fourth and finally for today, we who know that on our own we would lose heart, we need to be in the house of God.

We who know that on our own, if left to our own strength, we would despair, we would lose heart, we would give up on this Christian walk. We need to be in the house of God, don't we?

Look at verse 13. David confesses, I would have lost heart unless I have believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

David says, I'm weak. My faith is weak. But it's this promise from the Lord that what my soul experiences now by faith, I will get to know this fully one day.

I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. But he says, I'm not in the land of the living yet. So what's the opposite of the land of the living?

[ 33 : 12 ] It's the land of the dying. There's either this age or the age to come. We're not yet in the age to come, the land of the living. We're still in this present evil age, what scripture calls it.

And in this time, verse 14, David instructs God's people under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Wait on the Lord. Be of good courage and he shall strengthen your heart.

Wait, I say, on the Lord. David is confessing that the people of God are weak people.

But the Lord loves to minister his strength to weak people like you and me. Here's the truth that David receives and preaches to us.

Unless we believe that we will see the goodness of the Lord one day in the eternal state, we will lose heart in this life. There will be no hope.

[ 34 : 14 ] We should despair if we don't have that promise promise. And we know it's ours in Jesus. You will see God in the land of the living one day.

And the Lord will use that promise to strengthen your heart and mine. How did the Lord lead David to respond in these verses? Be of good courage.

Wait on the Lord. The Lord will strengthen your heart. You wait on the Lord believing in this hope.

Believe in this one thing for which God is preserving you until the very end. You wait until you get to the top and you can look back and see all of God's providence throughout every trouble, every attack of the enemy, every deep place of abandonment and despair.

You wait in this life with the hope of that great vision one day. I found myself reflecting and wondering why is it that the Lord gives us little tastes of this even in this life?

[ 35 : 26 ] Some of you will use this summer to travel and maybe drive going a long road trip like to the Grand Canyon. And the kids are asking a hundred times when will we be there?

Are we there yet? How many more minutes? And you just tell them it's going to be worth it. Just wait until we get there. Get to the edge of the Grand Canyon and it's so much wider and deeper than anything I could describe to you.

Or some of you are going to try to go and hike up a 14er and it's painful and you're not having enough oxygen in your muscles and you're getting to the top and you're wanting to turn around and you say wait, wait, it's going to be worth it.

Keep going. And that vision of 360, the western slope, the front range, I mean, as far as the eye can see and you can even imagine a little beyond that.

It was worth waiting until we got there. It will all be worth it. You'll get to view the goodness of God displayed in his creation and that will stir up your imagination trying to picture that the new heavens, the new earth beyond what even our own minds could conceive of now so much more glorious.

[ 36 : 38 ] David says, Christian, believer, wait upon the Lord. I say, wait on the Lord. Through this life in the land of the dying, the Lord will bring you to the land of the living where you will get to behold the goodness of the Lord fully.

It will be so worth it. Let that be your strength now to take one more step. Put your foot in front of the other one more time. Do it with the church. The Lord is with us.

In John 14, our Lord Jesus Christ spoke these words that echo and fulfill Psalm 27. Let not your heart be troubled. Believe in God.

Believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions and I will go to prepare a place for you there. I will come again and I will receive you to myself that where I am there you may be also. This is what Peter then turns around having heard that from Christ himself and he tells the church in 2 Peter 3.13 we hold on to this promise from Jesus. We look forward to a new heavens and a new earth where righteousness dwells.

[ 37 : 57 ] Mrs. Hartley reminded us in the Bible study of Stephen the martyr. He was in the land of the dying. Stones were pounding him. And you remember what happened to Stephen.

The body of Christ torn like a veil by faith gave Stephen Stephen more than a glimpse united his soul to the holy of holies in heaven and God allowed witnesses that day.

One of them was Saul who would become the apostle to witness this man's face glowing from being in the presence of Christ in the house of God.

Revelation 22.5 tells us that in the eternal state night will be no more. Remember how this psalm began. God you are my light. You are my strength.

Revelation 22 says that we will need no light of lamp or sun for the Lord God will be our light and we will reign with him forever and ever.

[ 39 : 07 ] Our Lord grows in us. He swells up in us that one great desire that David experienced and described. God will preserve that in us this hope that one day he will satisfy it consummately.

We will dwell in the house of the Lord and we will be forever with him. In the meantime here in the land of the dying God's people wait upon the Lord together encouraging one another admonishing one another with songs and shouts of joy receiving Christ by faith.

We trust that we will soon behold God's goodness fully unhindered by our own limits by our own sin. We look forward together to behold God's delightful glory by sight until then as the hymn says till with the vision glorious our longing eyes are blessed and the great church victorious shall be the church at rest.

Amen. Let's thank our great God. Oh Lord we praise you. We praise you for your Holy Spirit ministering the finished work of Jesus that we know what Psalm 27 was prophesying and pointing toward and we taste it Lord by faith now stir up this desire in us Lord please more and more you promise you will that we will seek your face and enjoy communion with you now which is a foretaste of that rest we will have with you forever more for all eternity Amen.

Amen. Amen.